

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 010565  
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SIG-01 ACDA-12  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13  
/115 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:KPGARLAND:JJ  
APPROVED BY AF/E:RPOST  
AF/P:BRUSSEL

-----016445 141703Z /40

R 140029Z JAN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
USINT HAVANA  
USMISSION USNATO  
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 010565

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, ET, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 156

PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED JANUARY 9 GIVES DEPARTMENT'S  
EVALUATION OF MIDDLETON ARTICLE. QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN  
RAISED AT NOON BRIEFINGS. TEXT FOLLOWS:  
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QUESTION: WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THE JANUARY 8 NEW YORK  
TIMES STORY BY DREW MIDDLETON THAT STATES THE SOVIET  
AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA WAS DESIGNED TO TEST AND DEMONSTRATE  
THE USSR'S ABILITY TO MOVE SUPPLIES AND TROOPS TO THE  
AREA, HAS INVOLVED 225 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT, HAS FAR EX-  
CEEDED ETHIOPIA'S IMMEDIATE REQUIREMENTS, AND DEMONSTRATES

THE HIGH PRIORITY MOSCOW ACCORDS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
A PERMANENT BASE IN THE AREA.

ANSWER: THE ON-GOING SOVIET AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA APPEARS  
TO BE PRIMARILY RELATED TO THE SOVIET UNION'S SUPPORT OF  
THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WHOSE ARMED FORCES ARE HEAVILY  
ENGAGED IN FIGHTING IN ERITREA AND THE OGADEN. THE  
NUMBER OF TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT ALLEGED BY MIDDLETON TO BE  
INVOLVED APPEARS TO BE CONSIDERABLY EXAGGERATED. WHILE

THE USSR NO LONGER HAS ACCESS TO NAVAL AND AIR FACILITIES  
IN SOMALIA, THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN US NO  
REASON TO BELIEVE IT WOULD PERMIT SOVIET MILITARY BASES  
ON ITS TERRITORY.

QUESTION: PLEASE COMMENT ON THE STORY'S STATEMENT THAT  
US SATELLITES, SURVEILLANCE SHIPS AND RADAR SITES ALONG  
THE AIRLIFT ROUTES IDENTIFIED YUGOSLAVIA, PAKISTAN, IRAN,  
TURKEY, GREECE, ISRAEL, EGYPT, SUDAN AND LIBYA AS  
COUNTRIES "WHERE FLIGHTS WERE RECORDED."

ANSWER: AS IS STANDARD PRACTICE, I DO NOT WISH TO COMMENT  
ON INTELLIGENCE MATTERS.

QUESTION. ARE YOU DISCUSSING THE AIRLIFT WITH THE USSR?

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ANSWER: THE HORN OF AFRICA IS A SUBJECT WHICH WE HAVE  
DISCUSSED WITH THE SOVIETS ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS,  
BUT I CAN'T GO INTO DETAILS.

VANCE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY AIRLIFTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978STATE010565  
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**Drafter:** KPGARLAND:JJ  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 78 ADDIS ABABA 156  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**TAGS:** MASS, ET, UR, US  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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